

Male Empowerment in Zimbabwe

A man lies on a blanket in his darkened hut. His head rests on an emaciated arm. You see in his face, inert body and narrow limbs that he is dying, but he is not alone. Two men have come, on foot, from a neighboring village. They have been here many times, with their small kit of supplies, to wash the man, to treat his many sores, to replenish his pain pills and to give him company. They are what have come to be known in Zimbabwe as “male empowerment volunteers.”

In several rural and urban areas of Zimbabwe, Africare has pioneered “male empowerment” to provide home-based care where, increasingly, families decimated by HIV/AIDS and other diseases are unable to tend their sick. The male volunteer caregivers, often members of churches and community groups, have become a Godsend to hundreds of sick people and their loved ones.